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Downham Market Urban District Council

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**ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
Medical Officer of Health  
FOR THE  
YEAR 1950**

To which is appended the Report of  
the Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor  
(Mr. J. F. LORIMER, M.R.S.I.)

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DR. C. T. DARWENT, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

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# Downham Market Urban District Council

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## Members of the Public Health Committee

Mr. C. E. Bowman, *Chairman.*

Mr. H. Alflatt	Rev. W. B. S. Dorman
Mr. A. G. Barber	Mr. J. Hinton
Mrs. G. B. E. Bennett	Mr. E. A. Walker
Mrs. I. M. Burbeck	Mr. W. A. Wright

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## Public Health Officers of the Local Authority

### MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Dr. C. T. Darwent, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Also holds the appointments of:—

Asst. County Medical Officer of Health

Asst. County School Medical Officer

Medical Officer of Health to Downham Rural District.

Medical Officer of Health to Marshland Rural District

### SANITARY INSPECTOR & SURVEYOR

J. F. Lorimer, M.R.San.I.

STOKE FERRY,

June, 1951

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting for your consideration my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1950.

The vital statistics for the year in question are satisfactory and the general health of the community is of a high standard.

No cases of Diphtheria were notified during the year.

Unfortunately there was one case of Acute Poliomyelitis in an adult. The case terminated fatally. The source of infection was untraceable.

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the help and co-operation I have at all times received from Mr. Dodman, the Clerk to your Council.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

C. T. DARWENT,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

To The Chairman & Members  
of the Downham Market Urban District Council.

## SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS, 1950

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	...	1003
Population, 1931 Census	...	...	...	...	...	...	2465
Population, 1950	...	...	...	...	...	...	2650
Number of separate dwellings occupied, 1931	...	...	...	...	approx.	750	
Number of separate dwellings occupied, 1950	...	...	...	...	...	...	875
Rateable Value, 1950	...	...	...	...	...	...	£14,933
Product of a Penny Rate, 1950	...	...	...	...	...	...	£56

### LIVE BIRTHS

	Rate					
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	38	15	23			
Illegitimate	4	2	2			
	<u>42</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>25</u>	15.8	15.8	15.85

### STILL BIRTHS (Rate per 1,000, Live and Still Births)

Total	Male	Female	Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
—	—	—	Nil	16.3	20.59

### DEATHS (all causes)

Total	Male	Female	Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
32	15	17	12.07	11.6	11.46

### DEATHS from Puerperal Causes

Puerperal and post-Abortive Sepsis	...	...	...	...	Nil
Other Puerperal causes	...	...	...	...	Nil

### INFANT MORTALITY (Rate per 1,000 Live Births)

#### Rate

Total	Male	Female	Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	25.72

### DEATHS FROM

Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil

## SECTION A

### Natural and Social Conditions

Area (acres) ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1003
Population ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 2650

DEATHS. After adjustment for inward and outward transfers the total number of deaths assigned to the District was 32.

BIRTHS. The number assigned to the District was 42 as compared with 49 in 1949.

The comparability factors as given by the Registrar General for the year 1950 are—Births 1.14, Deaths 0.76.

MATERNAL MORTALITY. There were NO maternal deaths.

STILL BIRTHS. NO still birth was recorded out of a total of 42 births.

INFANT MORTALITY. NIL.

## SECTION B

### General Provision of Health Services

#### 1. GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES

Norfolk Executive Council, 54 Prince of Wales' Road,  
Norwich. Clerk—R. J. Cobb, Esq.

#### 2. EAST ANGLIAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD

Senior Administrative Medical Officer :—

Dr. J. B. Ewen, M.D., D.P.H.,  
Croft-Holme, 117 Chesterton Road,  
Cambridge.

##### (a) GENERAL

- (i) Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Norwich.
- (ii) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital, King's Lynn
- (iii) Jenny Lind Hospital, Norwich.
- (iv) St. James' Hospital, King's Lynn (for chronic sick).
- (v) The Howdale Home, Downham Market.

##### (b) MATERNITY

- (i) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital (Maternity Unit)
- (ii) Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

(c) INFECTIOUS

- (i) County Isolation Hospital, East Dereham.
- (ii) Isolation Hospital, King's Lynn.

(d) SANATORIA

- (i) Kelling Sanatorium, Holt.
- (ii) Bramblewood Sanatorium, Holt.

(e) MENTAL

- (i) St. Andrew's Hospital, Norwich.
- (ii) Hellesdon Hospital, Norwich.
- (iii) Heckingham Sanatorium, Norwich.
- (iv) Little Plumstead, Norwich.

### 3. MATERNITY SERVICES

(a) DISTRICT NURSES.

Nurse Reeves, 2 London Road,      } Downham Market  
Downham Market.                    } Downham West.

(b) MATERNITY. Beds in Regional Hospital Board Establishments.  
Stow Hall Maternity Home, Stow Bardolph.

### 4. AMBULANCE AND HOSPITAL CAR SERVICE

This is a County Council function and is controlled by the Joint Ambulance Committee. It is worked on an Agency basis by the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John and W.V.S.

The Downham Urban area is served by the Downham Market Ambulance.

Infectious Disease cases are conveyed by East Dereham and King's Lynn Infectious Disease Ambulances.

### 5. RED CROSS MEDICAL LOAN DEPOT

Downham Market. Mrs. I. M Burbeck, Court House..

### 6. COUNTY MEDICAL SERVICES

(a) THE DOWNHAM MARKET INFANT WELFARE CENTRE

This was previously held at the B.R. Cross Headquarters—Howdale Road pending the completion of the Health Office buildings—Howdale Road. The centre is now held at the latter address.

The Assistant County Medical Officer of Health is in attendance at the session which is held from 2 to 4 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

I must register my warm appreciation of the voluntary help given at each session by the ladies of the local branch of the British Red Cross.

(b) SCHOOL MINOR AILMENT CLINIC

This is under the supervision of the School Nurse, who is in attendance at 10 a.m. every Wednesday during the term.

The clinic is held at Downham C.P. Mixed School.

The Assistant County M.O.H. attends one session a month or more often should the necessity arise.

(c) SCHOOL DENTAL CLINIC

This is at present closed—as no Dental Surgeon is available.

(d) HOME HELP SERVICE

The County Home Help Scheme is working smoothly and judging by results—the efforts of the five occasional Home Helps— are greatly appreciated.

## 7. VENEREAL DISEASE CLINIC

West Norfolk and King's Lynn Hospital:

Males	Females & Children
Tuesdays & Fridays	Tuesdays & Wednesdays
7 p.m.	at 3 p.m.

## 8. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION

- (i) Disinfection of premises is carried out by the Senior Sanitary Inspector's staff.
- (ii) Disinfestation of bedding, clothing, etc., which cannot be carried out by this department, are sent to the East Dereham Isolation Hospital.

## 9. LABORATORY SERVICES

(a) Public Health Laboratory,  
Isolation Hospital,  
Bowthorpe Road,  
Norwich.

Under the direction of Dr. I. M. Dowsett.

(b) Public Analyst:  
W. Lincoln Sutton, Esq., F.R.I.C.,  
Redwell Street,  
Norwich.

## SECTION C

### Prevalence of and Control Over Infectious and other Diseases

SMALLPOX Nil

SCARLET FEVER Nil

#### DIPHTHERIA

NO case was notified during the year. As a word of warning - I should care to stress the great importance of energetically carrying on the immunisation campaign, although cases of diphtheria are unheard of in our district. This freedom from any outbreak has only been established by the immunity produced in the child population by the advent of immunisation against diphtheria. Any complacency might easily have unfortunate results.

The family doctor is always willing to immunise any infant, between the age of ten months and one year. A few children are however immunised at the Infant Welfare Centres at the parents request.

The following table gives the number of children immunised since the inception of the scheme and up to 31st December, 1950.

Under 1 yr	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	5-9 yrs.	10-14 yrs.	Child Population
-	13	30.	28	24	185	147	0-4 yrs 256 / 5-14 yrs 373

Total immunised 428, 68.04 %.

#### WHOOPING COUGH

Twenty cases were officially notified during the year as against Nil in 1949.

#### MEASLES

There was a very marked decline in the number of cases notified during 1950. There were only 20, as against 125 in 1949. No deaths were assigned to this cause.

#### TUBERCULOSIS

The following table indicates the incident of new cases of Tuberculosis (all forms in the District during 1950).

T.B all forms			Rate per 1,000 population Downham U.D.C.	County rate
Male	Female	Total		
-	-	-		0.89

## SECTION D

Table No. I

## STATISTICAL TABLES, 1950

## CAUSES OF DEATH

Causes of Death		MALE	FEMALES	TOTAL
1 Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	—	1
2 Tuberculosis, other	...	—	—	—
3 Syphilitic diseases	...	—	—	—
4 Diphtheria	...	—	—	—
5 Whooping Cough	...	—	—	—
6 Meningococcal infections	...	—	—	—
7 Acute Poliomyelitis	...	—	1	1
8 Measles	...	—	—	—
9 Other infective and parasitic diseases		—	—	—
10 Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	...	1	—	1
11 Malignant Neoplasm, lung, Bronchus		1	—	1
12 Malignant Neoplasm, breast	..	—	1	1
13 Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	...	—	—	—
14 Other Malignant Lymphatic and Neoplasm		3	1	4
15 Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	...	1	—	1
16 Diabetes	...	—	—	—
17 Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	1	5	6
18 Coronary disease, angina	..	2	—	2
19 Hypertension with heart disease	...	—	—	—
20 Other heart diseases	...	2	4	6
21 Other Circulatory diseases	...	1	1	2
22 Influenza	...	—	—	—
23 Pneumonia	...	—	—	—
24 Bronchitis	...	—	2	2
25 Other diseases of the Respiratory system		—	—	—
26 Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	—	—	—
27 Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea		—	—	—
28 Nephritis, Nephrosis	...	—	—	—
29 Hyperplasia of Prostrate	...	1	—	1
30 Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	—	—	—
31 Congenital Malformations	...	—	—	—
32 Other defined and ill defined diseases		—	2	2
33 Motor vehicle accidents	...	—	—	—
34 All other accidents	...	1	—	1
35 Suicide	...	—	—	—
36 Homicide and operations of war	...	—	—	—
All causes	...	15	17	32

## SECTION H

Table No. 2

## Causes of Death of Children Under One Year, 1950

Causes of Death	AGE IN WEEKS						Total
	1	2	3	4	5—52		
I. Congenital Malformations							
II. Diseases of Early Infancy	...						
(a) Congenital Debility	...						
(b) Premature Birth	...						
(c) Injury at Birth	...						
(d) Atelectasis	...						
(e) Others	...						
III. Diseases of Respiratory System							
IV. Diseases of Nervous System							
V. Diseases of Digestive System							
VI. Tuberculosis Disease	...						
VII. Infectious Disease	...	...					
VIII. Syphilis	...	...	...				
IX. Overlaying	...	...	...	...			
X. Violence	...	...	...				
XI. All other causes	...	...					
Total	...						Nil

Table No. 3

## New Cases of and Deaths from Tuberculosis, 1950

Age in years	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
— 1								
— 5								
— 15								
— 25								
— 35								
— 45								
— 55					1			
— 65								
65 & over								
Totals					1			

MONTHLY INCIDENT OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES, 1950  
Table No. 4

(Other than Tuberculosis)

DISEASE	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apl.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Measles	...	...	1	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	2	8	10	...	...	2	...	...	8
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Infective Jaundice	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	3
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Dysentery	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Totals	...	...	1	2	4	8	12	2	...	3	...	...	32

Table No. 5  
 NOTIFIABLE DISEASES  
 NOTIFICATION IN AGE GROUPS, 1950

DISEASE	Under 1 year						65 & over			Removed to Hospital Deaths
	1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	20—	35—	
Scarlet Fever	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Nil
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Nil
Measles	...	—	2	2	—	1	2	—	—	Nil
Whooping Cough	...	—	1	2	4	5	8	—	—	Nil
Erysipelas	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Nil
Pneumonia	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Nil
Infective Jaundice	...	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	Nil
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Dysentery	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Nil
Totals	...	—	3	4	4	6	12	—	2	1
								—	32	1
										1

## Report of Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting for your consideration my Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1950.

### 1. Inspections during the year

(a) Number of houses inspected for defects	...	...	37
(b) Number of inspections for the purpose	...	...	58
(c) Number of houses found not to be in all respects fit for human habitation	...	...	6

### 2. Remedy of defects without Service of Formal Notice

(a) Housing Act, 1936	...	...	...	...	Nil
(b) Public Health Act, 1936	...	...	...	...	1

### 3. Number of New Houses built or under Construction during 1950

(a) Houses completed by Local Authority	...	...	2
(b) Houses completed by Private Enterprise	...	...	1
(c) Houses under construction by Local Authority	...	...	20
(d) Houses under construction by Private Enterprise	...	...	3
Total houses owned by Local Authority	...	...	108

### 4. Meat Inspection

The whole of the meat supplied to the Urban District comes from the Ministry's Slaughter Houses at King's Lynn. During the year 150 lbs. of beef were condemned as unfit for human consumption.

### 5. Food Inspection

No adulteration of any foodstuff was reported during the year. 63 tins and packets of various foodstuffs were voluntarily surrendered as unfit for human consumption.

### 6. Milk and Dairies

Serving the district there are two producer retailers and three retailers. During the year there was one case of Brucella Abortus reported. For a time the sale of milk from the farm was restricted and alternative supplies of milk arranged for. The herd has now been proved negative and all restrictions on the sale of milk raised.

### 7. Movable Dwellings

During the year the Council issued two licences under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, in respect of two caravans. Only one of these is in occupation. The tenant of the second van having obtained alternative accommodation.

## **8. Public Cleansing**

(a) SCAVENGING. The whole of the scavenging on both County and District roads is undertaken by the Council's employees. On the whole, the streets are kept tidy.

(b) REFUSE COLLECTION. During the year the Council took over delivery of a new side loading refuse vehicle. House refuse is collected once weekly throughout the district. A number of properties situated just outside the district in the Broomhill and Crow Hall areas are also served. Disposal of refuse is by means of tipping on land adjacent to Railway Road. Trouble was experienced of tipping by unauthorised persons. Precautions taken have now stopped the entry of lorries on to the tip.

## **9. Salvage**

(a) PAPER. The Council continued its salvage organisation throughout the year. Collections increased over the previous year from 33 tons 4 cwts. 2 qrts. to 35 tons 10 cwts. 2 qrts. This is an average of approximately 30 lbs. per head of population, 1.12 tons per 1,000 population per month.

## **10. Rags and Bones**

The Council do not operate a scheme for the removal of these wastes.

## **11. Dangerous Buildings**

No cases were brought to the notice of the Council during the year.

## **12. Disinfection and Disinfestation**

During the year four houses were disinfected at the occupier's request. No cases of Bed Bugs were reported.

## **13. Destruction of Rats and Mice**

Your Sanitary Inspector and an employee attended a course held by the Ministry at Cambridge. Poisoning was carried out at the Refuse Tip, Sewage Works, and Sewage System. A number of premises in the town were also treated. It is still not generally realised that the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, places on the occupiers of premises a duty to notify the Local Authority of cases where their premises are infested by rats and mice.

## **14. Factories and Workshops**

Two cases of insufficient means of ventilation were dealt with during the year. These were remedied without resort to official action under the act.

## 15. Water Supply

The Water Supply in the District is from mains of the recently formed Wisbech Water Board which took over from the Wisbech Water Works Company. The supply comes from deep wells in the chalk at Marham. Six samples of water were taken from wells. Twelve properties were connected to the Boards mains during the year.

## 16. Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

Further trouble has been experienced with the Sewerage system during the year. The sewer through Brighton's field has been a continual source of trouble and has had to be cleared on a number of occasions. This is serious owing to the fact that there is a storm water overflow on this length which comes into operation when the sewer is blocked. The sewerage then flows into the ditch at the bottom of Priory Road Housing Site. The sewer in Priory Road is in a very bad condition. This sewer is constructed of brickwork, part of which caved in and approximately 40 feet were relaid. From the state of the kerbing in Priory Road it is obvious that there are other parts of the sewer which are suspect. Further blockages occurred in the sewers along Lynn Road and behind the houses on the south side of Railway Road.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. F. LORIMER,

*Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.*





